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CONSPIRATORS SENTENCED IN AUTOMOTIVE BATTERY THEFT RING

Tampa, FL - U.S. Attorney Robert E. O'Neill announces that U.S. District Judge Elizabeth A. Kovachevich sentenced Elier Boza last week to 37 months in federal prison for conspiring to transport in interstate commerce stolen goods with a value exceeding \$5,000. As part of his sentence, the court also entered a \$205,000 money judgment against Boza, representing the proceeds he obtained as a result of the thefts, and ordered him to forfeit to the United States a 21 foot Pleasure Pursuit Craft boat and a Ford F150 Truck.

Boza pleaded guilty to the thefts on July 22, 2010. According to court documents, Boza, who was a driver for a transport company, and other co-conspirators who worked for Envirofocus Technologies, stole numerous tractor-trailer loads of used automotive batteries, which were then re-sold for a profit. Documents and records were falsified in order to conceal the thefts. The conspiracy started in 2006 and continued through 2009, resulting in a loss to Envirofocus Technologies and Johnson Controls, Inc. of almost \$3.4 million, which the court ordered Boza and his co-conspirators to repay. Co-conspirators Donald Vold and Emely Romero also pleaded guilty to federal charges and were sentenced in separate cases to 24 months and 21 months imprisonment, respectively.

This case was investigated by the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office and the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigations. It was prosecuted by United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill and Assistant United States Attorney Josephine W. Thomas.